

IRS News Release

Media Relations Office

Washington, D.C.

Media Contact: 202.622.4000

www.irs.gov/newsroom

Public Contact: 800.829.1040

Millions in Refund and Child Credit Checks Returned to IRS, Taxpayers Urged to Update Addresses by Dec. 5

IR-2003-125, Oct. 27, 2003

WASHINGTON — IRS Commissioner Mark W. Everson reminded taxpayers they have until Dec. 5 to claim 115,744 undelivered checks from this summer's advance child tax credit. After the December cut-off, taxpayers cannot claim the checks until they file their tax returns next year.

These undelivered checks are among nearly 24 million issued this summer and fall for the advance child tax credit. In all, more than \$14 billion in child credit checks have been issued.

"Time is running out to get an advance child credit check," Everson said. "We encourage taxpayers to visit IRS.gov to see if they have an undelivered check from the advance child tax credit mail-out."

In all, the IRS has money for more than 200,000 taxpayers whose income tax refund or advance child tax credit checks were undelivered and returned to the agency. Taxpayers need to update their addresses before the IRS can reissue the checks, which total more than \$118 million.

In addition to the 115,744 child credit checks worth more than \$50 million, there were another 92,810 "regular" tax refund checks, those issued to refund tax overpayments, returned to the IRS as undelivered. These "regular" refund checks total more than \$66 million — an average of \$722 per check.

"Our Web site makes it easy for taxpayers to track undelivered checks," Everson said. "Our goal is to get this money back in the hands of the people it belongs to, and we want to get the checks out as soon as possible."

IRS.gov, the IRS Web site, lets taxpayers track both their refund and their advance child tax credit. "Where's My Refund?" provides information about refunds and "Where's My Advance Child Tax Credit?" provides information about the tax credit. Both are available on the IRS home page.

To use the resources on IRS.gov, taxpayers enter information including their Social Security number and their filing status (such as single or married filing jointly). In addition, the refund amount shown on their 2002 tax return is required for refunds. To

get information on the advance child tax credit, taxpayers must also enter the number of exemptions shown on their 2002 tax return.

When the information is submitted online, taxpayers see Web pages that show the status of their refund or advance child tax credit check. In many cases, they also get instructions they need to resolve problems.

“All we need is a good address,” Everson said. “As soon as we get the correct address we can start the check on its way. We urge taxpayers to act before Dec. 5 for the advance payments so we can reissue the checks before the end of the year.”

Taxpayers without access to the Internet who think they may be missing a refund or advance child tax credit check should first check their records or contact their tax preparer before calling the IRS toll-free assistance line at 1-800-829-1040 to update their address.

Taxpayers can avoid undelivered refund checks by having their refunds deposited directly into a personal checking or savings account. Direct deposit also guards against theft or lost refund checks. The option is available on both paper returns and electronically filed returns. More than 44 million taxpayers chose direct deposit this filing season, up 11.6 percent from last year. Direct deposit was not available for the advance child tax credit checks.

Refund checks go astray for reasons that can vary with each taxpayer. Often, it's because a life change causes an address change. If taxpayers move or change their address and fail to notify the IRS or the U.S. Postal Service, a check sent to their last known address is returned to the IRS. The Postal Service says more than 40 million Americans change addresses annually.

Taxpayers who have moved since filing their last tax return can ensure the IRS has their correct address by filing Form 8822, Change of Address, with the IRS. Download the form or request it by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).

— 30 —

Editor's Note: Local media looking for details on undelivered refunds or advance child tax credit payments should contact their local IRS Media Relations office. Local media contact names and numbers are available in the Newsroom at IRS.gov. National media should call 202-622-4000.

Related Items:

- “Where’s My Refund?” -- <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96596,00.html>
- “Where’s My Advance Child Tax Credit?” -- <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=111546,00.html>
- Local media contacts -- <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=97242,00.html>
- Form 8822, Change of Address -- <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8822.pdf>